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ABSTRACT

Urban Impact is a Title II Teacher Quality Enhancement Act partnership grant supporting the development of new strategies and structures to strengthen the preparation and development of beginning teachers in urban settings in Tennessee. This study evaluated the success of Urban Impact in establishing professional and social supports for the first years of teaching and developing a broad-based understanding of and support for the need for improving the preparation of teachers for urban contexts that involves the Tennessee State Department of Education, business and community leaders, and national organizations. Data were obtained for mentors and novice teachers in the 11 Knox County, Tennessee schools that participated in the program in its first 2 years. In all, 84 novice teachers were affected by the mentor program in its first 2 years. The study includes data provided by 42 urban specialists who participated as mentors. Survey responses from teachers showed overall positive responses to the program, with appreciation for the mentoring received. The impact of the program, in terms of teacher turnover, was difficult to determine, as departing teachers generally do not say why they leave. The program did appear to have positive effects on the professional work and growth of mentors, and post assessment data from mentors was positive. Teacher and mentor surveys are attached. (SLD)

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Mentoring: Findings From a Title II Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant

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URBAN IMPACT is a Title II Teacher Quality Enhancement Act partnership grant supporting the development of new strategies and structures to strengthen the preparation and induction of beginning teachers in urban settings. A five year renewable grant funded by the U. S. Department of Education (GRANT #P336B990043-00A), URBAN IMPACT is a partnership of The University of Tennessee at Knoxville (UTK), The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC), the Tennessee State Department of Education, Knox County and Hamilton County school systems, and business leaders in both communities. The grant is focused on improving the preparation of pre-service teachers for culturally diverse urban contexts and ensuring beginning teachers' success and long-term employment in high need schools.

To reverse the national teacher attrition rate trend of approximately 50% in urban schools within the first five years of teaching, the U.S. Department of Education supports the efforts of universities and school systems to find ways to refine pre-service preparation and to enhance the induction of beginning in-service teachers (McCreight, 2000). The Tennessee partnership (two universities and their partner school systems along with the TN State Department of Education) was one of twenty-four grant recipients across the nation during the initial phase of Title II funding to receive a grant designed to address teacher quality through a combination of pre-service and in-service interventions. Tennessee's teacher turnover statistics closely mirror the national figures with 42% of novice teachers leaving the profession within the first 5 years (Educator Supply and Demand in Tennessee, 2001). In urban settings, the figures equal or exceed the statewide statistic. In gathering baseline data for the grant application, Knox County identified a 40% attrition for beginning teachers with rates closer to 50% in schools identified as "urban." A number of factors were identified that contribute to these figures: 1) most novice teachers have traditionally been placed in the most difficult teaching contexts, either in an individual school or in a school system, as a result of vacancies left when previous teachers moved to other schools, grade levels, or subject areas; 2) many novice teachers have not received adequate preparation for working effectively with students and families from backgrounds or cultures other than their own; 3) most mentoring efforts have traditionally been sporadic and dependent upon mentoring

teachers' making a difference with a novice teacher without support and/or professional development related to the induction process, and 4) few school systems have implemented a systemic effort to support novice teachers.

Addressing the teacher induction and turnover issue became a central focus for all URBAN IMPACT grant activities. The guiding questions were: What should be integrated into pre-service preparation that would better support the induction of novice teachers into the high need schools? How could schools and school systems implement systemic teacher induction plans that would assure high quality mentoring and greater sense of efficacy and success for novice teachers? How can the impact of effective mentoring on teaching and learning be determined? These questions were addressed by the goals and objectives of the grant.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The specific goals of URBAN IMPACT focus on:

1) restructuring university coursework and university/school partnerships to better equip pre-service and beginning in-service teachers with the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to succeed in working with diverse student populations;
2) establishing a system of professional and social supports during the critical first three to five years of teaching that will reduce attrition, enhance student success, and strengthen perceptions of professional efficacy; and
3) developing a broad-based understanding of, and support for, the need for improving the preparation of teachers for urban contexts which will directly involve the TN State Department of Education, business and community leaders, and national organizations such as UNITE (Urban Network to Improve Teacher Education) and the Holmes Partnership.

This paper directly addresses goals 2 and 3 and includes the progress of the grant initiatives towards mentoring novice teachers to date. As of the third year of implementation, URBAN IMPACT currently has 15 schools involved in the Mentor Program. The program involves administrators and teams of teachers who participate in professional development workshops, design action plans, implement the action plans,

and assess the results. URBAN IMPACT evaluators have designed and implemented formative assessments to provide the school based teams and grant staff with feedback regarding the impact of efforts. Grant staff meet on a regular basis with the school teams to facilitate the development and implementation of the school-based initiatives and provide resources as needed.

As a result of the initial year of grant implementation, The Tennessee State Department of Education adopted the program for certification of mentors across the state along with another program from Vanderbilt Peabody School of Education and a third developed through another TN State Department Title II grant. With this approval, the Tennessee Academy for School Leaders (TASL) office asked URBAN IMPACT to expand the mentor program beyond the Knoxville and Chattanooga partnership sites to include schools in Memphis, Nashville, and Johnson City. The TASL academies, entitled "Raising the Bar for Teacher Performance and Student Achievement in High Need Schools Through Mentoring," were made available to schools in urban, suburban, and rural settings with urban schools being given a priority in enrollment.

This paper focuses on the study of the impact of the Mentoring Program in Knox County's 11 urban schools that received the mentor team training and support during the first two years of the grant. While there are currently 4 additional schools engaged in the program for their first year, they could not be included in this study since they have only begun their efforts and have no data to document impact. The specific objectives of this study were to determine:

1) the impact of the Mentor Program on the induction of novice teachers (e.g., work satisfaction, commitment to urban schools, and perceptions of support and self-efficacy).
2) if the teacher turnover rate is positively impacted in the schools involved in the Mentor Program.
3) the impact of the Mentor Program on the professional growth and work satisfaction of experienced teacher mentors.
4) the perceptions and level of involvement of school administrators in the development and implementation of each school's Mentoring Program.

MENTOR TRAINING

The mentoring program is focused on providing a well planned support system for pre-service teachers, beginning in-service teachers in their first five years of teaching, teachers new to urban school contexts, and teachers experiencing difficulty in working with students in urban schools. The mentoring program has several key components.

First, the design of the program focuses on teams of principals and teachers at each site (mentor core teams) serving in a leadership role to establish and implement a mentoring program that is tailored to the needs of their pre-service and novice teachers. Teams at each elementary school consist of teachers from each grade level, one special areas teacher, and all principals (n=7-8 at each elementary school). At the secondary level, the teams include teachers in each of the core content areas (math, science, English, social studies) and a teacher from another content area along with principals (n=6 from each middle and high school). Each of the teams tailor their plans to their unique contexts, but share what they are learning with each other.

Second, in depth training and support is provided to the teams who are to assume responsibility for sharing the information with their colleagues in their schools. This is presented in a three-day TASL workshop, "Raising the Bar for Student Achievement in High Need Schools through Mentoring," that is designed to acquaint the mentoring teams with research-based strategies for assuming the varied roles mentors must play. The workshop is divided into two days, held during the spring, summer, or early fall, in which participants are actively engaged in learning the research on mentoring and "best practices" related to external, community, school, school culture, classroom, and personal factors that impact the success of beginning teachers. Considerable time is spent during these two days on modeling research based practices; understanding varying mentor roles; developing strategies for helping novice teachers understand students and cultures other than their own; observing and providing feedback; incorporating standards (INTASC, ISLIC, TN State Framework for Evaluation, and content area) into the process; and developing action plans to establish a formal mentoring program in each pilot school. On the third day, which is scheduled for the second semester, additional research-based information on mentoring is provided to enhance each team's collective

knowledge base. Time is also devoted to sharing what each team has accomplished during the first semester as a "cross-pollination" strategy.

The third component is regular mentoring meetings at each school site. In the Knox County Schools, these meetings are supported by URBAN IMPACT staff and resources (e.g., school stipends to support mentoring efforts, books provided for professional libraries, and speakers/coaches when needed). At other sites, these additional resources are provided by the school system. Mentor Core Teams meet frequently at the beginning of the year to develop their plans for the year. They continue to meet at least once a month and keep URBAN IMPACT personnel informed of their progress. University partners attend some, but not all of the meetings. It is during these meetings that they discuss progress and obstacles and identify refinements needed for their plan. In addition to mentoring core team meetings, additional meetings are being held at each site with the pre-service and novice teachers. The purpose, content, and duration of these meetings varies according to the needs of each school and the structure they provide to implement their plan. Mentor core team teachers are also assigned at least one individual teacher that they mentor one-on-one on a regular basis throughout the school year. At the conclusion of the school year, each mentor is responsible for preparing a documentation of the year's activities with their individual mentee(s). Each Mentor Core Team has also been asked to link their induction action plan to their School Improvement Plan.

RESULTS

The results presented in this paper focus on mentors and novice teachers in the 11 Knox County schools who have been part of the Mentor Program for the first two years. During the first year (2000-2001), five schools with 34 mentors and eight administrators (principals and assistant principals) initiated the effort. During the second year (2001-2002), six schools with 42 mentors and 6 administrators were added. A total of 84 novice teachers were impacted by the Mentor Program during the first two years. While 4 additional schools were added during the third year (2002-2003), there has not been adequate time or data collection to include these schools in this study. However, during the summer workshop for the third year group of schools, Urban Specialist candidates, who are exemplary urban teachers participating in a two-year, twelve credit hour

"certificate" program at UT, were added to the pool of mentors. The Urban Specialists, who have demonstrated their expertise in the area of urban teaching, are enhancing their knowledge of "theory" and "practice" in order to "raise the bar" for mentoring novice teachers within the Knox County School System. (For more information regarding the Urban Specialist program, please see the URBAN IMPACT website at http://outreach.utk.edu/urban). With two exceptions, these 42 Urban Specialists are from the 15 schools that are participating in the Mentor Program. The 40 Urban Specialists who teach in the initial 11 schools are included in this study.

Outcomes for the eleven Year One and Year Two schools are derived from five sources including:

- *Summaries of meetings between URBAN IMPACT personnel and Mentoring Core Teams at each school.* Progress toward school mentor program goals is assessed at each meeting and new strategies are developed as a result of sharing successes and challenges. Mentor Core Teams are also provided with information regarding novice teacher needs and perceptions (pre- and post- assessments analyzed by URBAN IMPACT staff), teacher turnover rates, and current mentoring ideas during these meetings. Notes and artifacts from each meeting are compiled and analyzed by school.
- *Pre-post written assessments completed by novice teachers.* All beginning teachers complete a "Beginning Teacher Needs Assessment" which identifies their experience level and primary needs. It also provides the novices with an opportunity to share their perceptions about "how" the mentoring could be delivered in the most appropriate ways. In April/May of each year, novice teachers are asked to anonymously complete a "Novice Teacher Perceptions of the Mentoring Experience" survey (closed and open-ended questions) assessing their perceived impact of the Mentor Program. This information is collected by URBAN IMPACT personnel, analyzed, and reported to the Mentor Core Team at the beginning of the following school year.
- *Pre-post written assessments completed by mentor teachers.* Mentors completed a needs assessment survey during the Mentor Program professional development sessions (first day). The results were used to focus the workshop on the needs of

the participants and to assist in designing follow up meetings with the school-based teams. The pre-assessment also provided baseline data for assessing the impact of participation in URBAN IMPACT activities for mentors.

- *Teacher retention data collected at each school site.* These data were collected by asking principals to work with grade level chairpersons (elementary) or department chairpersons (middle school and high school) to complete a form asking for the numbers of novice teachers (first five years of teaching) who had left the school as well as the reasons for their departure. This information was not available from Human Resources personnel and could only be gathered at the school site.
- *Focus group interviews with Mentor Core Team teachers.* URBAN IMPACT evaluators held four one-hour focus group interviews with a random sample of the 84 mentors from across the participating schools.
- *Focus group interviews with Mentor Core Team principals.* URBAN IMPACT evaluators conducted interviews with all of the principals involved in the Mentor Program.

Results of the data collection were provided for each Mentor Core Team for use in "fine tuning" their Mentor Program. Since the Mentor Program has the cyclical action research process as its core design, an analysis of responses from each year's implementation becomes "data" for use in designing the subsequent year's modifications. At the same time, the data are aligned by URBAN IMPACT personnel, looking at each individual school and across the total sample, according to each of the four objectives guiding the research of the Mentoring program. Both quantitative and qualitative data are analyzed on an annual basis for patterns and themes that reflect the experiences of the participants (novice teachers and mentors).

1. Impact on the induction of novice teachers (e.g., work satisfaction, commitment to urban schools, and perceptions of support and self-efficacy)

- There were 84 novice teachers who completed the pre-assessment survey. Their self-reported pre-assessment strengths and needs varied considerably within and across schools. However, some universal needs of the novice teachers included requests for *workshops* on accommodating the diverse needs of urban students,

classroom management, and dealing with school routines/paperwork. They also rated opportunities to learn form colleagues at the school site (e.g. observations, planning sessions, and sharing sessions) as a highly important need.

- There were 82 novice teachers who completed the *Novice Teacher Perceptions of the Mentoring Experience* survey. The novice teachers' quantitative post-assessment responses also varied across schools and among individual novice/mentor partnerships.
    - The quantitative portion of the survey revealed overall positive attitudes toward their experiences. Three-fourths or more of novice teachers either "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that all but 8 of the 38 items on the survey had been helpful in their professional growth. However, there were additional trends that impacted their ratings. First, all of the items were considered "not applicable" by some of the participants. The percentages ranged from 2% to 26% with the majority in the 2% - 10% range. Second, the most positive responses (90% or greater) focused on mentors efforts on their behalf (e.g., serving as a professional role model, accepting the novice, finding time to work with the novice, listening, providing support).
    - The qualitative portion of the survey identified several themes. The novices specifically focused on the impact of their mentors in making them feel welcomed in the school, providing support, linking the novice with other faculty who could address their concerns, providing informal opportunities to meet with and learn from colleagues, enhancing their knowledge and skills, assisting with school expectations (e.g., record keeping, meetings, paperwork), and providing a professional role model. Several specific comments, which are representative of the total population, highlight these themes:
        - As an educator, my participation in the mentoring program has enhanced my knowledge of how to meet the needs of the students and how to create parent teacher connections.

- The program has helped me develop confidence as I have received feedback and have been able to learn new things from an experienced and successful teacher.
- The mentoring program is most appreciated for providing me with support. I wouldn't have survived without the help!
- It helped me to become settled in - so my students have a grounded teacher who will not be a part of the high turnover rate here.
- Teaching is a tough profession emotionally. My mentor showed me someone cares about my growth. That gives hope to a teacher who might be struggling.
- When I have a stressful day or a conflict with a student, my mentors are always there to listen and give advice.
- The mentoring program gave me opportunities to meet with other new teachers and others to problem-solve.
- It helps me understand that it (teaching) will get better with experience.
- It has helped the new teachers form a community of support and introduced us to more experienced staff.
- It helped in the sense that I was "not the only one" who was struggling or having trouble in an area or situation.
- (From intern) I appreciated my mentor for treating me like a colleague. That was very important to me because I am so young, inexperienced, and uncertified. That really boosted my confidence level.

- The quantitative and qualitative portions of the survey also clearly targeted areas for improvement. While the survey responses were analyzed by individual schools for use by the Mentor Core Teams to refine the Mentor Program for the following school year, they were also analyzed across the total population. These findings are drawn from the total population.
  - The factors perceived as least effective (69% or fewer) on the quantitative portion of the survey focused on areas that require

additional time and expertise by those in mentoring roles. These included assistance in completing the TN Teacher Evaluation Process, maintaining effective professional relationships w/community members; holding regularly scheduled conferences with the mentor; observing mentors or other faculty members; linking with community resources that are available to address diverse needs of my students; and helping balance personal life responsibilities with the demands of teaching.

- Responses included on the open-ended portion of the survey suggested a variety of additional strategies that could be integrated into the Mentor Program. The two most frequently mentioned suggestion were: 1) creating a concise survival guide of forms and procedures that every teacher should know for each school, and 2) providing more opportunities to socialize, get to know colleagues, and develop a stronger network of support. The remaining responses, although not representative of the total group, included making sure every teacher has a mentor all year long ("Mine retired early in the school year"), holding meetings with all mentors and new teachers on occasion to discuss experiences, making the mentor/mentee experience more structured ("Little things sometimes slip through the cracks!"), and providing some make-and-take sessions with equipment to develop materials, laminate, glue, etc. or to provide time each semester to meet at the Teacher Center to create materials, posters, game boards, etc.

2. *Impact on the teacher turnover rate*

Year One and Year Two schools are in their third and second year respectively of implementation. While baseline data have been collected and updated figures are being compiled annually, the actual impact of the Mentor Program has been difficult to determine. There are several reasons for this. First, it has been impossible to gather "first hand" perceptions of the teachers who have left each school. Many did not leave forwarding addresses and there is no "exit interview" with the school system's Human

Resources Department. When asked whether the school system tracked this information, the response was that "We would be the last to know why. Since it could impact a future job application, our teachers generally do not tell us why they are leaving." Second, the information that has been gathered about numbers leaving the schools has come from a meeting with principals, grade level chairpersons, or department chairpersons. This information has been helpful and has begun to indicate patterns of departure in high turnover schools. Third, with just two years of data (and one from our second group of schools), there simply has not been adequate time to assess the impact of the Mentor Program on teacher turnover.

3. *Impact on the professional growth and work satisfaction of experienced teacher mentors.*

Based upon an analysis of the Mentor Needs Pre-assessment, the Program Evaluation for Mentors, and the Mentor Focus Group Sessions, several patterns have begun to emerge related to the professional growth experiences of mentors. In addition, the notes from ongoing Mentor Core Team meetings at the individual school sites have allowed URBAN IMPACT program staff to document additional themes and patterns.

The Mentor Needs Assessment is administered at the beginning of each Mentor Workshop sponsored by TASL. Responses are compiled for each group during the session and are used to assure that the two-day introduction to mentoring addresses the needs of the specific participants. A consistent pattern across workshops is that mentors feel more confident in their ability to provide support and orientation for novice teachers than they do in helping them with external expectations (e.g. standards, evaluation system, university expectations for pre-service teachers, and appropriate resources needed by a novice teacher). The next highest areas of need were in helping novice teachers work with the diverse urban student population (e.g., working with families, accommodating the diverse academic, social, and physical needs), assisting novices in becoming reflective practitioners, coaching and providing feedback, and modeling best practices. A large majority consistently indicate that they need to know more about how to mentor effectively. Nearly all want to make a difference with novice teachers and indicate a willingness to provide the time and effort necessary to achieve that goal.

Second, a number of outcomes have been documented that focus directly on professional growth for novices and mentors.

- Several Mentor Core Teams established a structure at their schools to address the issues that were problematic to mentors initially. Many developed and conducted workshops for novice teachers (e.g. 30-minute Thursdays, Brown-bag chats, Chat and Chew sessions) on topics identified by the novices on their pre-assessments. Most of these sessions focused on classroom management, paperwork requirements, assessment and grading procedures (specific grading software), needs of urban students, instructional strategies, and teacher evaluation process. Many also allowed time for novice and experienced teachers to discuss current needs and to identify possible strategies for addressing them.
- Materials from school-based innovations are being placed on the URBAN IMPACT website (e.g., scavenger hunts, lists for new teacher care packages, Mentor Application forms) to be shared with schools within and outside the URBAN IMPACT program.
- Some of the schools are developing video libraries of exemplary practices. Classroom teachers are videotaping specific teaching strategies (e.g., cooperative learning, Socratic seminars) and are then debriefing the lessons on tape as a model of reflective practice. These tapes are being used at the individual school sites in informal mentor/novice coaching sessions and are also being shared with other schools in the program.
- URBAN IMPACT has supplied each school with 10 books for their professional library to use with assisting novice teachers. Some schools have used the books to facilitate a book study. Others use them as part of their one-on-one mentoring. Several of the mentoring teachers have read specific books (each reading a different one in many cases) so that they are able to refer novices to "specific sections" that are needed when an area of interest or concern arises.

- Several of the administrators who are placing an emphasis on the Mentor Program are sharing what they are doing and learning with other teams and

schools - through workshops. Sessions have been provided for the TN State Department of Education Beginning Principal Institute, UT's Annual Travis Hawke Colloquium, and the URBAN IMPACT Summer Institute. Additional materials are currently being developed to be added to the website.

Third, post-assessment data from mentors (Program Evaluation for Mentors administered in May 2002, n=64) was overwhelmingly positive. (See attachment for the one-page quantitative results.) One hundred percent of the teachers feel that they have a better understanding of the needs of novice teachers and that they have had adequate support to fulfill their roles as mentors. However, nearly twenty percent feel that they could still use additional direction, support, and resources to carry out their roles. Approximately the same percentage do not view the mentoring program as having facilitated communication among the faculty in their buildings. The one major negative response related to the URBAN IMPACT website. Eighty percent have not accessed the site. Many have not used the website which has not been completed to a point that it is as usable as it could be and worth the time learning to use it.

Responses from the Mentor Focus Groups also highlighted several themes among the mentoring teachers. First, most noted that the program facilitated their ability to help novices by better understanding their needs. This was related to what was learned in the Mentor Workshops, use of Novice Teacher Pre-assessment data, and discussions during Mentor Core Team meetings (with and without URBAN IMPACT personnel involvement). It was also related to their ability to provide better coaching and feedback to novice teachers. Secondly, it improved communication with each other and novices. Third, it impacted the mentors' own professional growth. According to one mentor, "It helped make us more aware of own classroom when we must explain why something works." The mentors also felt that learning more about the community (e.g., community mapping) and service learning were beneficial as were the additional resources provided to the school's professional library. Fourth, developing the action plans, having a Mentor Core Team, and formally assigning mentors "added structure and organization to mentoring practices." The mentors also highlighted the various strategies that have been developed and shared across the participating schools to support and integrate novices

into the school culture: video libraries, classroom observation structures, chat and chew activities, new teacher showers, formal and informal mentoring practices, and formal induction plans. Fifth, they perceived benefits for themselves in their mentoring role. Comments included helping us "approach conflicts as a team," provide "credibility for good teachers within the school," and "stopped burnout." As one teacher stated, ""The more I mentor, the more I learn about myself." Another said, "I am interested in continuing mentoring and would recommend the program to others."

4. Perceptions and level of involvement of school administrators in the development and implementation of each school's Mentoring Program.

All eleven administrators from the Year One and Year Two schools were interviewed and all were positive about the program. All specifically identified components that were making an impact with novice and experienced teachers in their schools. More than half of the administrators have actively supported the program from its inception. A smaller percentage have supported the work of their Mentor Core Team without actively engaging in the process themselves. In some, mentoring has become infused into the school improvement planning process. In others, it is something that is carried out informally with minimal "programmatic" expectations beyond those the mentors impose upon themselves. All of the administrators would recommend program to other principals.

When interviewed, the administrators' comments focused primarily upon the structure provided by the program that has improved mentoring efforts, the reduction in novice teachers' problems that have required administrative involvement, the reduction of teacher turnover (in second year schools), the impact on teacher and administrator professional growth and morale, and improved communication. The following capture the essence of the principals' comments:

- All of us are learning about the community with Community Mapping.
- It has empowered teachers-- gets them involved.
- It has involved veteran teachers with the new evaluation model which has provided a rejuvenation to stay in teaching.
- It has increased communication and sharing – benefits entire school family.

- We've reduced the number of problems first year teachers experience – teachers are helping each other.
- I deal with fewer problems. Most are diffused before they are brought to the principal so I have more time to devote to other tasks.
- It has helped novice teachers deal with the down times and keep morale positive.
- It has encouraged mentor teachers' work towards higher degrees - M.S. or Ed.S.

CONCLUSION

While the first two years of this program have been beneficial to the novice teachers and their colleagues, we recognize that we have only taken the first steps. As we know from the research, only a systemic approach to induction will reduce the growing teacher turnover rate. We have begun to develop the systemic approach and are now moving toward a school system-wide focus as well as a state-wide plan for teacher induction that is linked to the school improvement planning process. A major finding from our analysis of interviews and minutes of meetings is that the individual teams are often stifled in their efforts to learn from each other. We need to provide a forum for the schools to continue to learn from each other. The URBAN IMPACT website is one vehicle as are other forms of "face to face" professional development sessions. We are currently developing a Mentor Trainer of Trainers Program to expand the efforts across the state of Tennessee. The goal is for each system to identify exemplary teacher mentors who could provide the mentor professional development for teachers within their systems (urban) or across a region (rural). If every school viewed teacher induction as an integral component of their school improvement plan, efforts would become more structured and monitored rather than the "hoped for" mentoring that has resulted from sporadic, although well intentioned, efforts in the past. Finally, we also recognize the need to research our practice to be able to clearly document the impact the Mentor Program is having on all stakeholders. This charges us with the responsibility to continue to collect turnover data and to learn from those who are directly impacted by this program.

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URBAN IMPACT website: http://www.outreach.utk.edu/urban

Novice Teacher Perceptions of the Mentoring Experience
University of Tennessee and Knox County Schools
URBAN IMPACT

Summary of responses, May 2002
N = 82

4 = Strongly Agree
3 = Agree
2 = Disagree
1 = Strongly Disagree
NA = Did not experience
M = Mean

		4	3	2	1	NA	M
1.	**Mentors at my school helped me to understand the professional expectations for teachers related to:**						
	a. Fulfilling classroom responsibilities	51%	41%	3%	1%	5%	3.48
	b. Assuming grade level or departmental responsibilities	43%	35%	7%	3%	12%	3.35
	c. Assuming appropriate school level responsibilities (e.g., extra-curricular, committees)	39%	43%	7%	0%	11%	3.36
	d. Knowing and following school and school system policies and procedures (e.g., paperwork, Special Education requirements, emergency procedures)	49%	37%	9%	4%	2%	3.34
	e. Addressing standards (national, state, system, INTASC)	31%	41%	15%	4%	10%	3.10
	f. Completing the TN Teacher Evaluation Process (e.g., professional expectations, evaluation criteria, paperwork, timelines)	37%	32%	11%	6%	15%	3.16
2.	**Mentors helped me learn how to establish and maintain effective professional relationships:**						
	a. With students	51%	42%	2%	0%	5%	3.51
	b. With parents and caregivers	46%	40%	6%	2%	5%	3.37
	c. With colleagues	48%	32%	9%	4%	9%	3.35
	d. With administrators and other school/school system leaders	45%	35%	7%	4%	9%	3.33
	e. With community members	28%	31%	21%	2%	17%	3.03
3.	**The following mentoring activities helped me develop as an educator:**						
	a. Regularly scheduled conferences during the school day with mentor(s) to plan, discuss issues, or celebrate accomplishments	29%	29%	13%	4%	24%	3.11
	b. Informal conferences with mentor(s)	54%	30%	5%	2%	10%	3.49
	c. Coaching by my mentor (e.g., observations, promoting reflection, providing feedback, encouraging new strategies)	36%	36%	6%	5%	17%	3.24
	d. Observing mentor(s) and other faculty members	37%	25%	11%	1%	26%	3.32
	e. Informal meetings with other faculty	38%	48%	5%	1%	7%	3.33
	f. Informal "get togethers"	45%	37%	6%	0%	12%	3.44
	g. Learning opportunities at the school (e.g., sharing of effective strategies, workshops, special sessions on topics of interest to novice teachers, study groups)	39%	43%	5%	2%	11%	3.33
	h. Encouragement to attend system-wide learning opportunities (e.g. in-service sessions, new teacher orientations, new teacher workshops)	39%	39%	9%	1%	12%	3.32

4 = Strongly Agree
3 = Agree
2 = Disagree
1 = Strongly Disagree
NA = Did not experience
M = Mean

		4	3	2	1	NA	M
4.	Mentors impacted my professional development by:						
a.	Serving as professional role models	55%	35%	4%	4%	2%	3.45
b.	Accepting me as a professional colleague	61%	32%	2%	1%	4%	3.58
c.	Making time for me when I needed assistance	66%	28%	1%	2%	2%	3.61
d.	Providing the specific support and assistance I needed	57%	32%	4%	2%	5%	3.51
e.	Listening to my concerns and helping me identify solutions	62%	28%	4%	1%	5%	3.59
f.	Being flexible and open-minded in assisting me.	61%	27%	4%	2%	6%	3.56
g.	Helping me get to know other faculty and staff	43%	34%	11%	4%	9%	3.27
h.	Linking me with faculty who could assist me in addressing my concerns	50%	29%	7%	4%	10%	3.39
i.	Helping me acquire the resources I needed	50%	33%	6%	4%	7%	3.39
j.	Helping me develop a repertoire of effective instructional strategies	33%	49%	6%	4%	7%	3.21
k.	Helping me design a supportive learning environment and effective classroom management system	32%	48%	4%	4%	13%	3.24
l.	Helping me learn strategies to address the diverse needs of my students	35%	40%	11%	2%	11%	3.22
m.	Helping me develop interpersonal and relationship building skills	32%	45%	11%	1%	11%	3.21
n.	Helping me understand the organization and culture of the school	49%	38%	7%	1%	5%	3.41
o.	Helping me understand the school community and its issues, strengths, and resources that impact our students	44%	43%	6%	0%	7%	3.41
p.	Linking me with community resources that are available to address the diverse needs of my students	23%	31%	24%	4%	18%	2.90
q.	Helping me learn to balance my own life responsibilities with the demands of teaching	27%	34%	21%	2%	16%	3.01
r.	Helping me become a more reflective teacher	29%	49%	9%	2%	11%	3.18
s.	Making me aware of my development as an educator and assisting me in setting goals for my continued professional growth	34%	42%	10%	2%	12%	3.22

Urban Impact Mentoring Program

Program Evaluation for Mentors
Summary May 2002

N = 64

Yes	No (NR – no response or multiple responses)	
87%	13% (4)	1. Did the program make clear what was expected of you as a mentor?
100%	0% (2)	2. Did you receive adequate support from your building Mentor Coordinator?
95%	5% (2)	3. Did you receive adequate support from your school administrator(s)?
93%	7% (3)	4. Did the professional development activities in August and January meet your needs as a mentor?
90%	10% (5)	5. Did the individual contact(s) with your mentor coordinator meet your needs?
97%	3% (1)	6. Did the building-level activities for mentors meet your needs?
84%	16% (2)	7. Did the program provide sufficient direction for your mentoring activities?
86%	14% (1)	8. Has the program focused on enhancing your skills as a mentor?
74%	26% (6)	9. Did the program provide you with new teaching resources?
100%	0% (2)	10. Has the program helped you recognize the needs of teachers new to your school?
98%	2% (1)	11. Has the program helped you respond to the needs of teachers new to your school?
79%	21% (2)	12. Has the program made you more familiar with the different levels of standards for teachers?
84%	16% (2)	13. Did the mentoring program help you identify and locate resources for teachers new to your school?
95%	5% (1)	14. Has the program helped you recognize strengths of other teachers in the school?
84%	16% (1)	15. Has the program increased faculty communication in your school?
83%	17% (4)	16. Has the program increased collaboration among faculty in your school?
21%	80% (20)	17. Have you been able to access the website developed by the program?

If No, please skip to item 25 at the bottom of the page.

21%	18. Was the website easy to navigate?
19%	19. Were the contents helpful?
21%	20. Was it well organized?
18%	21. Were the contents up to date?
16%	22. Could materials be downloaded/printed easily for use with students?
14%	23. Were requests and questions responded to in a timely manner?

24. Approximately how often do you visit the website?

0 Daily 2 3% Weekly 2 3% Monthly 10 16% Seldom/Never

No response: 50 78%

25. Suggestions to improve the program: _____

_____

_____

26. Suggestions to improve the website: _____

_____

Urban Impact
Mentor and Urban Specialist Professional Library

1. Cole, R., Ed. (1995). Educating everybody's children: Diverse teaching strategies for diverse learners. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

2. Delpit, L. (1995). Other people's children: Cultural conflict in the classroom. New York: The New Press.

3. Gregory, G. and Chapman, C. (2002). Differentiated instructional strategies: One size doesn't fit all. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

4. Ladson-Billings, Gloria. (1994). The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

5. Marzano, R. Pickering, D., and Pollock, J. (2001). Classroom instruction that works: Research-based strategies for increasing student achievement. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

6. Strong, R., Silver, H., and Perini, M. (2001). Teaching what matters most. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

7. Torp, L., & Sage, S. (1998). Problems as possibilities. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Newly Added as of June 2002

8. Robert J. Marzano, Debra J. Pickering, Daisy E. Arredondo, Guy J. Blackburn, Ronald S. Brandt, Cerylle A. Moffett, Diane E. Paynter, Jane E. Pollock, Jo Sue Whisler (1997) Dimensions of Learning Teacher's Manual, 2nd edition Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development, 2nd tch edition.

9. Gloria Ladson-Billings, 2001 Crossing Over to Canaan: The Journey of New Teachers in Diverse Classrooms, John Wiley & Sons

10. Joyce Hale, 2001 Learning While Black: Creating Educational Excellence for African American Children Johns Hopkins University Press

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